

NOAA Definitions for Performance Measurement

Capability – The ability to do something; the capacity to be used, treated or developed for a specific purpose.

Capacity – The inputs and outputs of a process associated with a desired outcome.

Cross-Cutting Priority (Areas of Emphasis) – Establishes the programmatic and managerial foundation for delivery of services and effective operations throughout the agency or across multiple Line Offices. In addition to supporting NOAA's mission goals, each priority maintains a budget identity and has its own performance measures. The management of these priorities is found within an identified program or a council. The six Cross-Cutting priorities from NOAA's Strategic Plan are:

Integrated Global Environmental Observation and Data Management
Environmental Literacy, Outreach, and Education
Sound, State-Of-the-Art Research
International Cooperation and Collaboration
Homeland Security
Organizational Excellence

Effectiveness – The quality of having an intended or expected effect.

Efficiency – The quality of acting or producing effectively with a minimum of waste, expense, or unnecessary effort.

Evaluation - To examine and judge carefully; appraise.

Frame of Reference – The applicable level in the NOAA Performance Measurement Pyramid; Goal, Program, Program Component or Activity.

Functional Themes – A set of generic actions used in the NOAA Strategic Plan to describe the life-cycle of products and services from the collection of raw data to the management of resources. Formally known as the "Mission Strategies" or "NOAA by the Verbs," these themes are common to most NOAA Line Offices. The five themes are supported by a variety of infrastructure processes. The five themes are:

1. **Monitor and observe** the land, sea, atmosphere, and space and create a data collection network to track Earth's changing systems.
2. **Understand and describe** how natural systems work together through investigation and interpretation of information.
3. **Assess and predict** the changes of natural systems, and provide information about the future.
4. **Engage, advise, and inform** individuals, partners, communities, and industries to facilitate information flow, assure coordination and cooperation, and provide assistance in the use, evaluation, and application of information.
5. **Manage** coastal and ocean resources to optimize benefits to the environment, the economy, and public safety.

Goal – An elaboration of the mission statement, developing with greater specificity as to how an agency will focus its mission. The NOAA four goals are:

Protect, restore, and manage the use of coastal and ocean resources through ecosystem-based management
Understand climate variability and change to enhance society's ability to plan and respond
Serve society's needs for weather and water information
Support the Nation's commerce with information for safe, efficient, and environmentally sound transportation.

Input – The financial and human resources, intellectual processes and infrastructure the agency uses to produce its outputs. An element of the program capacity.

Metric – A term with many meanings . This term is not used in the NOAA Performance Measurement Process.

Mission – A concise statement on what the agency is charged to do. The NOAA mission is ***To understand and predict changes in the Earth's environment and conserve and manage coastal and marine resources to meet our Nation's economic, social, and environmental needs.***

Objective – An elaboration of a goal statement, developing with greater specificity how a goal will be achieved. Used below the Goal level to describe the intended results.

Outcome – The resulting effects – both expected and unexpected—of the customer's use or application of the organization's outputs.

Output – The products or services resulting from activities. An element of the program capacity.

Performance Measure – A structured statement describing how progress will be evaluated. Performance measures consist of four parts: Indicator, Unit of Measure, Baseline and Target.

Indicator – The part of a performance measure that defines the attribute or characteristic to be measured.

Unit of Measure – The part of a performance measure that describes what is to be measured.

Baseline – The part of a performance measure that establishes the basis for comparison through an initial collection and analysis of data. A baseline should include both a starting date and level.

Target – The part of a performance measure that establishes the desired level to be reached in a defined time period, usually stated as an improvement over the baseline. Targets should be based on research and a thorough understanding of the goal/program/activity and be challenging, worthwhile and achievable.

Program – The defined effort with the purpose of meeting existing requirements or providing a new or improved capability to meet stated requirement
. NOAA officially establishes programs at the NOAA Executive Council. A program is comprised of a combination of Program Components.

Program Components - The further separation of NOAA's Programs into business entities that deliver products and services to accomplish an objective.

Activities - The further separation of NOAA's Program Components into business entities that deliver products and services to accomplish an objective.

Strategy – A specific course of action chosen to achieve an outcome.

Sub-Goal – An elaboration of a goal statement, developing with greater specificity how an agency will achieve the goal. The current three sub-goals in the NOAA Strategic Plan, all under Goal 1, are:

- A. Protect and restore ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes resources;
- B. Recover protected species; and
- C. Rebuild and maintain sustainable fisheries.

Vision – A guiding statement providing the strategic direction for the agency given an established mission. The NOAA Vision is ***To move NOAA into the 21st Century scientifically and operationally, in the same interrelated manner as the environment that we observe and forecast, while recognizing the link between the global economy and our planet's environment.***